

## REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated November 20, 2003. Claims 1-18 and 36-88 are presented for examination, of which Claims 1, 17, 18, 36, 52-54, 71, 87, and 88 are independent. Claims 1-4, 17, 18, 36-39, 47, 52-57, 65, 71-74, 87, and 88 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention and Claims 48, 49, 58, 66, 67, 75, and 81-84 have been amended to ensure consistency of terminology. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Claims 17, 18, 52, 53, 87, and 88 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,751,965 (*Mayo et al.*). Claims 1-4, 6, 7, 9-12, 15, 36-39, 41, 42, 44-47, 49, 54-57, 59, 60, 62-65, 67, 71-74, 76, 77, 79-82, and 84 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Mayo et al.* in view of U.S. Patent 5,317,693 (*Cuenod et al.*). Claims 5, 40, 58, and 75 were rejected under Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Mayo et al.* and *Cuenod et al.*, and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,261,044 (*Dev et al.*) which *Mayo et al.* incorporates by reference. Claims 8, 43, 61, and 78 were rejected under Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Mayo et al.* and *Cuenod et al.*, and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,935,262 (*Barrett et al.*). Claims 13, 50, 68, and 85 were rejected under Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Mayo et al.* and *Cuenod et al.*, and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,109,486 (*Seymour*). Claims 14, 48, 66, and 83 were rejected under Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Mayo et al.* and *Cuenod et al.* and further in view of U.S. Patent 5,987,535 (*Knodt et al.*). Claim 70 was rejected under Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Mayo et al.* and *Cuenod et al.*, and further in view of *Knodt et al.*, and Claims 16, 51, 69, and 86 were rejected under Section 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Mayo et al.* and *Cuenod et al.*, and further in view of "Windows 95 Troubleshooting: Device Manager Error Codes" by InfiniSource (*Troubleshooting*).

As shown above, Applicants have amended independent Claims 1, 17, 18, 36, 52-54, 71, 87, and 88 in terms that more clearly define what they regard as their invention. In particular, the term "status" in Claims 1, 36, 54, and 71, and the term "condition" in Claims 17, 18, 52, 53, 87, and 88 have been amended to read --use status--. The "use status" of a peripheral device represents whether or not the peripheral device, which is locally connected, can be used by an information processing apparatus. This change has been incorporated in the independent claims in view of a discussion between the Examiner and Applicants' representative during a Telephone Interview conducted on October 9, 2003. Support for this amendment can be found at least at page 11, line 14, of the specification and Figure 8. Applicants submit that the amended independent claims, together with the remaining claims dependent thereon, are patentably distinct from the cited prior art for at least the following reasons.

The aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 1 is an information processing apparatus connected to a network, wherein the apparatus includes a communicating unit, a first, a second, and a third acquiring unit, and a display unit that communicates information with each of a number of terminal devices on the network. The first acquiring unit performs an acquisition function to acquire first information, related to the terminal device connected to the network, through the communicating unit. The second acquiring unit performs an acquisition function to acquire second information, related to a peripheral device which is locally connected (and not connected through the network) to the terminal device to which the first information pertains, while the third acquiring unit also performs an acquisition function to acquire a use status of the peripheral device to which the second information pertains. The display unit distinguishably displays information of the terminal device connected to the network, information of the peripheral device connected to the terminal device, and the use status thereof based upon the first information, acquired by the first acquiring unit, the second

information, acquired by the second acquiring unit, and the use status, acquired by the third acquiring unit.

One important feature of Claim 1 is an information processing apparatus connected to a network acquiring information related to a terminal device connected to the network through a communicating unit, information related to a peripheral device which is locally connected, the use status of the peripheral device, and then distinguishably displaying the acquired information including the use status of the peripheral device.

*Mayo et al.* relates to a method and apparatus for monitoring and displaying the status of connections or other relationships in a computer network. *Mayo et al.* provides graphical representations of connections among entities that make up a communications network. That is, the *Mayo et al.* system observes (monitors) devices connected through a network. The Office Action correctly states that *Mayo et al.* does not disclose the use of a peripheral device locally connected to a terminal device. The Office Action, however, cites column 3, lines 24-38, as disclosing a plurality of acquiring means for obtaining information about and status of devices. Applicants note that this reference refers to devices that are connected through a network, and not locally connected devices. Because *Mayo et al.* cannot acquire the information and the use status concerning a peripheral device which is locally connected, not through the network, *Mayo et al.* is unable to distinguishably display the information concerning the terminal device, the information concerning the peripheral device, and the use status concerning the peripheral device, as recited in Claim 1.

The Office Action at page 6 cites Figure 11 and column 6, lines 27-31, of *Mayo et al.* as disclosing the display means of Claim 1. Applicants respectfully disagree. The cited passage merely states that the network interface and control module 34 determines the status of connections within the network, and that the virtual network machine 36 contains

explicit link information that represents the connection status between network entities, so that the user interface 38 may include a display which conveys link information directly to a user. In the context of the cited passage, the term “connection” refers to the data path between or among network entities, while the term “link” refers to a data representation of such a connection (column 6, lines 32-34). As such, the cited passage merely discusses the status of connections between network entities, and not the status of the network entities themselves, much less peripheral devices that are locally connected. Accordingly, nothing has been found, or pointed out, in *Mayo et al.* that would teach or suggest the display means of Claim 1.

As such, nothing has been found in *Mayo et al.* that would teach or suggest a peripheral device locally connected, not through a network, where information relating to such peripheral device is acquired through a network, as recited in Claim 1. Still less does that patent teach an acquiring unit, as recited Claim 1, capable of performing such an acquisition function, nor does the patent teach a first acquiring unit acquiring first information, related to the terminal device connected to the network, through the communicating unit, a third acquiring unit acquiring a use status of the peripheral device, and a display unit distinguishably displaying information of the terminal device connected to the network, information of the peripheral device connected to the terminal device, and the use status thereof based upon the first information, acquired by the first acquiring unit, the second information, acquired by the second acquiring unit, and the use status, acquired by the third acquiring unit, as recited in Claim 1.

For at least these reasons, independent Claim 1 is believed clearly patentable over *Mayo et al.*, taken alone.

The Office Action cites *Cuenod et al.* as overcoming the deficiencies of *Mayo et al.* *Cuenod et al.* relates to a local area network for transferring data between a host computer and a multiplicity of low-speed input/output peripheral devices, such as keyboard, mouse, track

ball, tablet, joystick, modem and other devices. In the *Cuenod et al.* system, each peripheral device 110 has its own network interface 140 which couples the peripheral device 110 to the host computer 102 via a "desktop" communications network 150. The network 150 comprises a set of daisy chain connections 104, 152, 154, 156, the host computer 130, and the interfaces for each peripheral device 110. That is, *Cuenod et al.* has each peripheral device connected through a network interface 140. Figure 1 of *Cuenod et al.* depicts a host computer connected to a plurality of peripheral devices connected through a communication bus 104. Because the communication bus 104 is connected to respective network interfaces of the host computer, it is apparent that such a connection structure forms a network.

Even assuming *arguendo* that *Cuenod et al.* discloses peripheral devices locally connected, nothing has been found in *Mayo et al.* or *Cuenod et al.* that would teach or suggest an information processing apparatus connected to a network acquiring information related to a peripheral device which is locally connected, the use status of the peripheral device, and then distinguishably displaying the acquired information including the use status of the peripheral device, as recited in Claim 1. As discussed above, the *Mayo et al.* system does not discuss the use of locally connected peripheral devices, and as such is unable to acquire information, including use status, related to a peripheral device, and then distinguishably displaying the acquired information including the use status of the peripheral device. The *Cuenod et al.* system discusses an Attention message that is transmitted from the peripheral device's interface to the host computer. However, the Attention message of *Cuenod et al.* merely indicates whether the peripheral device's interface is capable of responding to other network commands and of operating in a normal fashion by transmitting a status byte of zero. *Cuenod et al.* is silent with regards to acquiring the use status of a peripheral device and distinguishably displaying the acquired information including the use status.

Applicants submit that neither *Mayo et al.*, *Cuenod et al.*, nor any combination thereof (assuming *arguendo* that any such combination would be permissible) would teach or suggest an information processing apparatus, connected to a network, for acquiring the use status of a peripheral device that is locally connected, not through the network, much less an information processing apparatus distinguishably displaying the information concerning a terminal device, the information concerning a peripheral device, and the use status of the peripheral device, as recited in Claim 1.

Applicants submit that Claim 1 is clearly patentable over references *Mayo et al.* and *Cuenod et al.*, taken separately or in any proper combination.

Independent Claims 36 and 71 are method and storage medium claims, respectively corresponding to apparatus Claim 1, and are believed to be patentable over those references for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with Claim 1. Additionally, independent Claim 54 includes similar features as those discussed above in connection with Claim 1. Accordingly, Claim 54 is believed to be patentable over those references for reasons substantially similar to those discussed above in connection with Claim 1.

The aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 17 is an information processing apparatus connected to a network. The apparatus includes a first saving unit, arranged to save a first information of the own device on the network, a connector, arranged to locally connect, not through the network, a peripheral device thereto, and a second saving unit, arranged to save a second information of the peripheral device connected by the connector. The apparatus further includes a detecting unit, arranged to detect a use status of the peripheral device connected by the connector, and a transmitting unit, arranged to transmit the first information saved in the first saving unit, the second information saved in the second saving unit, and the use

status detected by the detecting unit to another device in response to a request issued from the another device.

One important feature of claim 17 is a first saving unit which saves information of the own device (information processing apparatus), a connector which locally connects, not through the network, a peripheral device, and transmitting information of the own device, information of the peripheral device, and the use status of the peripheral device to another device on the network in response to a request issued from the another device.

As discussed above in connection with Claim 1, nothing has been found, or pointed out, in *Mayo et al.* that would teach or suggest an information processing apparatus connected to a network having a peripheral device locally connected. Therefore, it is not possible for the *Mayo et al.* system to save information of a peripheral device connected by a connector, detect a use status of the peripheral device, and transmit such information to another device in response to a request issued from the another device.

Accordingly, Applicants submit Claim 17 is clearly patentable over *Mayo et al.*

*Cuenod et al.* is not seen to overcome the deficiencies of *Mayo et al.*

Independent Claims 52 and 87 are method and storage medium claims, respectively corresponding to apparatus Claim 17, and are believed to be patentable over *Mayo et al.* for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with Claim 17. Additionally, independent Claims 18, 53, and 88 include similar features as those discussed above in connection with Claim 17. Accordingly, Claims 18, 53, and 88 are believed to be patentable over *Mayo et al.* for reasons substantially similar to those discussed above in connection with Claim 17.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same

reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

This Amendment After Final Action is believed clearly to place this application in condition for allowance and, therefore, its entry is believed proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment After Final Action, as an earnest effort to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe that issues remain outstanding, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact Applicants' undersigned attorney in an effort to resolve such issues and advance the case to issue.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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